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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the ways in which department chair and principal leadership influence the teaching secondary social studies classes. Based upon research in three sets of high schools, leadership efforts in the areas of curriculum program development, faculty collegiality, staff development, and school culture are explored. Instructional leadership at the department level that generates a common vision around a shared conceptualization of thinking, combined with curriculum development within a culture of collegiality and attention to teaching and pedagogic strategies, seemed to facilitate improved levels of classroom thoughtfulness in high school social studies classes. A 12-item list of references is included as well as tables of data. (Author)

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LEADERSHIP EFFORTS THAT FACILITATE CLASSROOM THOUGHTFULNESS IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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Abstract

This paper investigates the ways in which department chair and principal leadership can influence the teaching of thinking in secondary Social Studies classes. Based upon research in three sets of high schools, leadership efforts in the areas of curriculum program development, faculty collegiality, staff development, and school culture are explored. Instructional leadership at the department level that generates a common vision around a shared conceptualization of thinking, combined with curriculum development within a culture of collegiality and attention to teaching and pedagogic strategies, seemed to facilitate improved levels of classroom thoughtfulness in high school social studies classes.

Policy makers and researchers have argued that curriculum and instructional leadership can have a substantial impact on effective teaching and learning in schools (e.g., Peterson, 1989; Newmann, 1988a). This paper is a report of an investigation of the ways in which department chair and principal leadership can influence the teaching of higher order thinking in secondary social studies classes. Based upon classroom observations and interviews with teachers, department chairs, and principals in three sets of high schools, leadership efforts that help overcome the barriers to classroom thoughtfulness discussed by Onosko (1990) will be examined.

This report is based on a five-year study of how to enhance higher order thinking in secondary social studies. Our empirical work has pursued two central questions: (1) Why is it apparently so difficult for teachers to emphasize higher order thinking in the curriculum? And (2) What extent is it possible for high school social studies departments to overcome the barriers to teaching thinking and what is required to do so? In our research, we compared the levels of classroom thoughtfulness, barriers, and responses to barriers in three different sets of social studies departments: (a) select departments -- those that place special emphasis on higher order thinking but organize instruction according to typical patterns in the comprehensive U.S. high school; (b) representative departments -- those that make no special department-wide efforts to promote thinking and are also conventionally organized; and (c) restructured departments -- those in which there is a departmental emphasis on thinking and significant changes in the organization of instruction have also been made.

Each class we observed was rated on 13 different 5-point scales, of which six were identified as constitutive of classroom thoughtfulness; that is, one could not really judge a lesson to be "thoughtful" unless these six criteria were met (see appendix and Newmann, 1990a, 1990b). Departmental HOTAV scores reported below (also Table I) are the mean of these six scales. The difference between the means of the select (3.72) and representative (3.11) departments is more than

1.5 times the standard deviation for all 16 schools. In relative terms, this does represent rather large differences between the two sets of departments in the promotion of classroom thoughtfulness.

In this investigation, the departments which were most successful in promoting classroom thoughtfulness (high HOTAV) are compared to those which were least successful (low HOTAV). In comparing the top departments with the bottom departments, I ask whether the two groups are distinguished by leadership efforts that contribute to a greater emphasis on thinking. The top schools are defined as those schools scoring more than one standard deviation above the mean for all schools. These include three select schools: Grandville (4.05), Carlsberg (4.04), and Arnold (3.85). The bottom schools are defined as those schools scoring more than one standard deviation below the mean for all schools. These include four representative schools: Erskine (2.88), Downing (2.92), Wadsworth (2.93), and Pierce (2.94). Interestingly, none of the four schools from set (c) appear in the top or bottom group. As Ladwig (1990) has argued, this may be due in part to the wide variety of programmatic restructuring evident in these schools and the pursuit, through restructuring, of educational goals other than higher order thinking.

In the remainder of the paper, I will describe leadership activities in the top three and bottom four schools and suggest how certain of these activities seemed to help overcome barriers to classroom thoughtfulness. Particular efforts may, of course, have addressed multiple barriers. Table II summarizes the leadership efforts discussed and the schools which featured them. Department and principal leadership in the schools we studied focused on three areas: goals, curriculum, and pedagogy. Each area will be examined separately in the following sections but leadership activities often addressed two or more areas and may have represented more comprehensive approaches to educational improvement. These efforts will receive special attention. I conclude with a discussion

of the significance of department and principal leadership for promoting classroom thoughtfulness in secondary social studies.[1]

Goals

Secondary schools have multiple and often competing goals. Thus, a clear, and shared, sense of mission may be elusive. Additionally, social studies itself presents particular challenges to developing a cohesive departmental purpose because it is comprised of multiple disciplines that have varying perspectives on sophisticated or critical thinking, in addition to the pressure to cover large amounts of content (see Newmann, 1988b).

Departmental focus -- the bottom school

None of the four schools that scored at the bottom of our sample exhibited a common educational vision for social studies instruction focused on promoting students' thinking. Department heads cited "responsible decision-making," "to think and interpret in a historical context," and "skills to use knowledge in decision" as part of their educational objectives, but these had no more priority than other major objectives (e.g., "to promote social interaction skills"). Instructional leaders in these four schools were, for the most part, inactive in trying to generate support for and commitment to the goal of teaching thinking. The principal at Downing, for instance, stated that the goal of promoting thinking is really a question of faculty commitment, but she suggested that she did not know how to generate that commitment: "I wish I had a magic wand!" She admitted that theoretically she should have a great deal of influence on teachers, but because of her belief in faculty ownership she is to a degree paralyzed as to how to encourage change. "There is a possible conflict between the leverage I have (for promoting change) and my philosophy that the staff must have ownership."

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[1] The discussion of leadership in the three select schools is based, in part, on the report by McCarthy and Schrag (in press).

Wadsworth High School, one of the low scoring schools, offered an example of how department members can share common concerns without developing a substantive educational vision. This school located in a small midwestern city enrolls about 1500 students; half are students of color, the other half white, with 16% from low income families, and only 25% of the graduates go on to a 4-year college (the lowest percentage of the seven schools considered here). The department chair's statement regarding a shared vision within his department reflects the difficulties of teaching in this school, "Probably the single most important thread that binds the department together is a concern for the welfare of the student and an attempt to help solve some of their emotional problems." Two of the three teachers we interviewed voiced similar views. Although the department's concern for the "whole student," for their "emotional as well as academic progress," and for "building their self-confidence" reflects important concerns and reveals a sincere desire to reach this group of students, this vision is too broad to generate excitement about specific intellectual or educational goals.

Departmental focus -- the top schools

Findings from the top schools, in contrast, indicated that a common educational purpose to enhance students' thinking across the different courses in a department can be generated. Instructional leadership played a significant role in articulating and working toward a shared sense of mission. These three schools are considered next.

At Grandville High School, efforts to develop a program to promote higher order thinking in social studies under the leadership of the department chair, who also serves as district social studies coordinator, had been on-going for the 4 years prior to our study. The district clearly supports this emphasis on thinking throughout the entire K-12 social studies curriculum, as exhibited through allocation of additional funds and supplementary teacher release time to work on program development. Through our interviews, it was clear that there was a general consensus among

department staff that the development of critical thinking is the major goal of the school's social studies curriculum.

A slightly modified version of Bloom's taxonomy served as the conceptualization of thinking that guided the department's work. To implement this conceptualization, the staff developed generalizations, concepts, and themes for all required courses in the department. This consensus on thinking, both on the goal and the conceptualization, is reflected both in the staff's rhetoric and their pedagogy. Of course, variations were evident in the explicitness with which the model directed classroom practice. For example, one of the teachers we observed specified to the class in each lesson the particular thinking skill on which the lesson was to focus. Another made no explicit reference to the various skills but instead used the model as a heuristic aid to curriculum and instructional planning; that is, he developed questions for each lesson at the various levels of Bloom's taxonomy. In spite of variability in attention in the classroom to particular thinking skills, the high school social studies staff did share the goal of, and a model for, promoting students' thinking. As we will see, the character of the department members' work on curriculum and instructional approaches at Grandville contributed to and elaborated their focus on thinking. In this sense, the common vision within this department evolved from the direct participation of the staff -- in school visits, workshops with consultants, and team planning sessions -- rather than being mandated from the top. The department chair here was active in keeping this focus at the forefront of the staff's efforts.

In contrast to Grandville's focus on the whole social studies program, the work at Carlsberg was concentrated on the individual lesson. The significant aspect here seems to be the 'lesson formula' or format that was developed and continually emphasized by the department chair. Each lesson contained a problem or question that students were to answer. The problem was usually an evaluative question that required students to take a stand and offer supporting evidence in a large

group teacher-centered discussion (e.g., "Did the framers of the Constitution have the good of the country or their own interests at heart?"). The lesson model also called for an engaging introduction to encourage student participation in discussion. Lessons were designed to be completed within one class period. In the common vision within this department, then, teaching for thinking and good social studies lessons were not distinguished: both were assumed to include thought-provoking questions and class discussion.

The department chair at Carlsberg, with reduced teaching responsibilities (only one class), manifested coherent and purposeful leadership that perpetually focused staff work on the thoughtful lesson format. The staff shared this commitment, facilitated by the fact that many members of the department had worked together for 17 years under the leadership of the department chair. As one teacher expressed it, "[The department chair] has been here when most of us were young. He had the chance to mold us." The longevity and stability of the social studies staff, combined with a model of good social studies instruction that was centered on thought-provoking questions and problems, helped to generate a common educational vision at Carlsberg.[2]

At Arnold, the department chair, together with another social studies teacher, pioneered the development of an eclectic approach to teaching thinking which he called the "Integrative Mind Instructional Model." The emphasis here was on giving students a central task or problem to confront, often featuring metaphors and analogies which students create, discuss, and use. The model also included a focus on curriculum continuity and integration within a course, unit, and lesson and between courses. The content was unified around a central theme or themes and questions. The

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[2] Because of the exploratory nature of the study, we included in interview questionnaires a number of factors, such as leadership, departmental collegiality, and staff development, that may relate to the promotion of classroom thoughtfulness. Additional factors unique to specific schools also helped to explain a department's emphasis on thinking. One such factor at Carlsberg was the stability of the social studies staff.

social studies staff shared a commitment to his model; much of their shared emphasis stemmed from their collaborative work on curriculum, as we shall see in the next section.

The social studies departments in three top schools, then, exhibited a common vision on the promotion of students' thinking and have adopted and operationalized some conceptualization of thinking or model of teaching thinking for realizing this goal. In two of the schools, staff emphasized a central problem or task for particular lessons while those in the third concentrated on developing concepts, themes, and generalizations for their courses. Although the conceptualization of thinking and the models for instruction differed between each school, it seems reasonable to conclude that leadership efforts that foster a shared commitment to thinking and a workable model for teaching thinking may be more important to success in this area than adopting any one particular model or approach to thinking.[3] The focus on thinking was **department based**, not school-wide, with active direction from the department head in all three schools.

Staff development

Staff development may be an effective tool to reinforce and enhance the goal of higher order thinking in social studies. Technical assistance from consultants outside of the school or district is at times necessary to generate interest and commitment to particular educational objectives. Staff developers in the area of teaching for thinking, however, agree that technical assistance "must be supplemented by ongoing institutional support for teachers to work collaboratively in their own schools on the difficult issues entailed in teaching for higher order thinking" (Newmann, Onosko, &

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[3] The different conceptions of thinking and approaches to instruction in the top schools reflect the debates over the relative importance of knowledge, skills, and dispositions in developing students' thinking (see Newmann, 1990a). The success of these three schools suggests, however, that these debates may be misleading. Our research indicates that departments achieved relatively high degrees of thoughtfulness without a dominant focus on any of the three. That is, by taking a more integrative approach, in which, for instance, content was not separated from skills, lessons in these departments consistently exhibited elements of in-depth study of topics, skills focus, and modeling of thoughtful dispositions.

Stevenson, 1990, p. 55). Comparing staff development at the top and bottom schools provides further evidence on the ways in which instructional leadership can contribute to a shared commitment to promoting students' thinking.

Pierce High School, one of the low scoring schools, has officially recognized critical thinking as one of the important educational goals for the entire curriculum, and sponsors ongoing in-service in collaboration with a nearby college. The program was in its third year during the time of our study. Teachers from various departments throughout the school attend summer institutes at the college and then share their experience with school colleagues in the fall. The institute meetings focus on the practical application of critical thinking to the classroom and on the construction of tests. All three of the social studies teachers interviewed at Pierce commented on the effectiveness of the institutes and how they illustrated administrative support for the goal higher order thinking. The department chair clearly supported the institutes and encouraged teachers in the department to attend. But the institutes were oriented across all subject areas and, as we will see later, were only sporadically connected to a focus on thinking in the social studies department's curriculum revision or the supervision of teaching.

The school district where Erskine High School, another of the bottom group, is located sponsored a voluntary in-service program for all district teachers on critical thinking three years prior to our study. Two of the social studies teachers (20% of the department staff), one of whom also serves as department chair, attended the workshops. In our interviews with these teachers, they both indicated the positive impact of the workshops on their teaching; however, there have been no further staff development efforts in the department, school, or district that were focused on promoting thinking. Here, staff development, although focused on the teaching of thinking, was infrequent, was school-wide rather than department based, involved only a small percentage of the

social studies teachers, and was not connected to other efforts in the department such as curriculum development.

Staff development efforts at two of the top scoring schools differed significantly. At Grandville, the department chair took a two-tiered approach to staff development. First, social studies teachers visited nine other schools in the area for the specific purpose of observing the teaching of thinking and discussing with other staffs their efforts in this area. The visits occurred in 1982 when the department was just beginning to emphasize thinking. Teacher release time was secured for these visits. This activity gave staff a sense of purpose and accomplishment, especially because, as a result of the visits, they could see that they had made significant progress compared to other schools. The visits seemed to foster further interest and engagement in their work on critical thinking. In addition, the department chair also solicited the assistance of a number of consultants to work with the staff. This included a proponent of a particular conceptualization of thinking and model for teaching thinking that had been adopted by the department as well as other staff developers to help staff identify concepts, themes, and generalizations that would structure the social studies courses. Thus, work with consultants was closely linked to the continuing work of the department's staff in the areas of curriculum and pedagogy.

At Arnold High School, participation in a national critical thinking conference by the department chair and two other social studies teachers was the catalyst for the development of a model of thinking that has served to guide the staff's efforts to promote thinking. Follow-up work in the department, particularly team planning of course curricula and lesson design, was built from this model. The department chair, along with one of his social studies colleagues, has also given workshops at other schools on this approach to promoting thinking.

Summary

Two distinguishing features of these activities are evident. First, staff development efforts in two of the top schools were concentrated on the department level whereas those of the bottom schools, even though focused on higher order or critical thinking, were directed toward staff throughout the school. The importance of leadership focused on the department level will be highlighted throughout this analysis. Secondly, conference participation, in-service programs, or school visitations centered on the conception or model of thinking adopted by the department, and leaders made explicit connections between staff development efforts and teachers' collaborative work on issues involved in pursuing the goal of promoting students' higher order thinking.

The leadership efforts in the most successful departments outlined here seem to confront some of the major barriers to promoting classroom thoughtfulness discussed by Onosko (1990). For example, the common departmental vision, reinforced through staff development and collaborative work among department teachers, may help to overcome individual teacher isolation commonly characteristic of a school's culture, although, as illustrated by Wadsworth, a shared purpose in and of itself does not necessarily lead to the pursuit of substantive educational goals. Each of the top departments exhibited a conception of thinking which shifted instructional emphasis from knowledge dissemination to inquiry and problem solving. The endorsement by the department chair seemed to be a critical aspect of this emphasis. The conceptualization of thinking that is operationalized through an instructional model may also help to overcome the pressure to cover vast amounts of content that often serves as a serious barrier for many teachers.

Curriculum

Curriculum development occurred in each of the seven schools we studied. The top three schools directed this work explicitly at enhancing students' thinking. In contrast, the four schools at the bottom had other instructional goals to guide curriculum work or involved only a few teachers,

rather than the department as a whole, who were interested in curriculum revision to enhance students' thinking.

Curriculum Revision -- the bottom schools

At Pierce, one of the low scoring representative schools, departments develop curriculum revisions and submit them to a school-wide curriculum committee for review, but no projects in social studies have been focused on higher order thinking, according to the department chair. This is interesting since Pierce is involved in a critical thinking in-service project with a nearby college. The department chair and staff have failed to identify thinking as a central goal and make an explicit connection between teachers' work in the in-service project and curricular revision.

At another of the representative schools, Erskine, the department head clearly advocated the teaching of higher order thinking and wanted to see it reflected throughout the social studies curriculum. She suggested that the new curriculum for the required freshman course, History of World Civilization, which she developed in conjunction with two teachers, incorporated topics and strategies to promote students' thinking. The low scores from observations of this course, however, suggests that curriculum revision by only a small percentage of the social studies staff (3 of 10) is insufficient to generate much success in promoting classroom thoughtfulness.

Curriculum Revision -- the top schools

These findings contrast sharply with those from the three select departments where curriculum work was undertaken as an important mechanism for facilitating classroom thoughtfulness, and where both department heads and principals provided direction. In one school, Grandville, the social studies staff, under department chair leadership, revised the required U.S. history course to incorporate their focus on thinking. Lesson plans were formulated, demonstration lessons were taught, new curriculum materials were ordered, and criterion-referenced tests were designed to be used in classes -- all with a focus on thinking. Staff development efforts mentioned earlier, such as gaining assistance from

outside consultants, were incorporated in this work. At Carlsberg, with their focus on the individual lesson, groups of teachers designed new lesson plans during common planning periods and, along with the department head and principal, taught and critiqued demonstration lessons. A resource file was established where typewritten lesson plans were made available to all department staff. At Arnold, the department head organized curriculum planning groups aimed at incorporating the department's model of thinking. In each of these schools, curriculum development was explicitly focused on higher order thinking.

In all three schools with exemplary levels of classroom thoughtfulness, the department chair took an active role in curriculum planning. At Grandville, planning was done in teams of teachers who have the same course and the same grade. These teams met during a common planning period and the district made funds available for them to also spend 2-3 weeks together during the summer. The department chair here, teaching only one course per semester, was involved in his own planning team and oversaw the work of the other teams. He also took responsibility for organizing the summer work. Through this process, he has attended to and facilitated the incorporation of the thinking skills model adopted by the department.

At Carlsberg, the department head selected one course each year to be revised. He then scheduled the teachers who teach that course to the same prep period. During this time, the teachers discussed the lesson that would be taught two days hence. Each lesson plan was a product of group effort, and every lesson plan was available to all teachers in a resource file. The department chair, with only one class to teach, assisted in these course revisions by encouraging the use of the lesson plan model for fostering students' thinking.

The department chair at Carlsberg also used department meetings to foster a culture of thoughtfulness among teachers. He arranged to have 2 teachers debate a social issue with whole group discussion to follow. The issue under consideration one year was: Is the budget deficit as bad

a problem as portrayed in the press? The staff reported that these session were extremely stimulating; they typically ran overtime and teachers were seen still arguing afterward. The department chair connected this work to the classroom by periodically arranging for large groups of students from different social studies classes to observe teachers debate in the auditorium. Students spent the class period prior to the debate discussing the issue and preparing questions. The chair orchestrated a follow-up discussion between students and teacher-debaters. In previous years, the department chair has also used department meetings to foster reflectivity and a collaborative ethos. He has had teachers read the same section from a text and write lesson aims for that section. He would then lead a discussion as teachers evaluated each others' objectives. Though this was not directly part of their curriculum work, it seemed to make an important contribution to a department culture of collaboration and reflective practice that in turn encouraged the promotion of thoughtfulness in the classroom.

At Arnold, the department head organized teams, made up of teachers who teach the same courses, that plan together regularly before and after school and during lunch. He selected a head teacher for each team who was responsible for providing leadership. In this way, the department chair attempted, in his own words, "to make myself obsolete." He did teach 5 of the 6 periods each day so had limited opportunity to be as involved in curriculum development activities as his counterparts at Grandville and Carlsberg. He was, however, active within his own team, and made a special effort to take a more informal role with others. He frequently brainstormed ideas and planned lessons with other teachers who requested help or suggestions. He seemed to truly enjoy experimenting with lesson designs. Because he had no significant release time for departmental leadership, the quality of his own teaching seemed to suffer somewhat in terms of our indicators of classroom thoughtfulness. However, he was clearly aiding others in the department to infuse the model of thinking into their lessons. A discernable ethos of collegiality existed within the department,

exemplified by the team approach to curriculum planning and the frequent informal meetings among groups of teachers on professional issues. All the teachers we interviewed praised the leadership of the department chair, emphasizing the fact that he encouraged teachers to take risks in the classroom, that his own attempts to be innovative served as a model for staff, and that he treated everyone, including student teachers, as peers from whom he could learn.

Team Planning

Team or peer planning, then, played a central role in curriculum development in the top three schools. During these meetings teachers struggled with the implementation of the department's model for teaching thinking. The common characteristic of these departments is that peer planning of curriculum was explicitly focused on fostering students' thinking, with the department head taking an active role with staff in operationalizing the particular conceptualization or model of thinking.

In contrast, the four bottom schools offered few opportunities for sustained discussion of substantive curriculum and professional issues, and collaborative work on lesson or course planning was unusual. Each social studies department in this group held regular department meetings, but teaching for thinking was not a central agenda item; other departmental business dominated. Additional time, typically on in-service days, was also given to departments for meetings, but little attention was given to the teaching of thinking. The possibility of securing more time for professional discussions among teachers was dismissed outright by many of the teachers and department heads in these schools. As one of the department chairs stated, "To have more time for discussions on an organized basis is not feasible, under our financial restraints."

One of these representative schools does present an interesting example of an opportunity for sustained discussion among department members that does not intrude upon teachers' preparation time during or after school. Pierce High School scheduled department meetings **each week** for 55 minutes during the regular school day. The department chair reported, however, that the meetings

were rarely devoted to specific issues of teaching for thinking. According to one of the teachers, the meetings were concentrated mostly on how to deal with particular students and they allowed staff to "bounce a lot of ideas off each other." Thus, the social studies department at Pierce failed to take advantage of this opportunity to connect curriculum revision with the critical thinking workshops they attended and to develop a common focus on thinking.

Team planning did occur at one of the four bottom schools. At Downing, the three teachers we interviewed told us that they met with other teachers more than five hours each month. Since most social studies classes here were team-taught, this would be expected. But the focus of these meetings was to improve students' understanding of subject matter. There was a strong emphasis on content coverage. The department chair at Downing suggested that a lack knowledge about higher order thinking may have prevented teachers from focusing their efforts more on promoting classroom thoughtfulness. The staff at Downing had not given thinking priority over other instructional goals nor had they adopted a model of thinking to guide their efforts in planning, both prominent aspects of the three most successful departments.

The role of the principal

Involvement of the school principal in curriculum efforts to promote thinking was also distinctive of two of the top schools, Carlsberg and Arnold. In addition to his role in evaluation and instructional supervision of staff, which is examined later, the principal at Carlsberg regularly collaborated with the social studies department chair in setting and reviewing instructional goals. He also took his responsibility of reviewing teachers' final exams as an opportunity to check their emphasis on "factual vs. power questions," the latter defined as questions requiring application, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation (Levels 3-6 in Bloom's taxonomy). Through this review process, the principal lent legitimacy and prominence to the department's model for teaching thinking.

At Arnold, the principal perceived himself to be responsible for instructional leadership and provided support for efforts in promoting thinking through his direct involvement in curriculum work with his department heads and the eight mentor teachers at the school. The department heads and mentors, in turn, worked directly with other staff members to help improve the quality of instruction. The social studies department chair regarded the principals' support and guidance as crucial to department initiatives to further higher order thinking. Arnold's principal was, however, critical of the priorities of his district. He reported that there was no significant contribution for the promotion of higher order thinking from the district. He also believed that because of the administrative duties he must carry out, the district had significantly restricted the amount of time that he had to spend on curriculum and instructional improvement.

In contrast, instructional leadership by principals in the four representative schools was generally not as focused or directed. When asked what specific aspects of their school need to be changed in order for the school to improve the promotion of higher order thinking for all students and what leverage they might have to effect these changes, the principals by and large mentioned only teacher evaluations and in-service programs aimed at the teaching of thinking. Yet the department chairs at these schools who are responsible for the supervision of teachers tended to believe that evaluations were not effective in communicating expectations to staff, and in only one of the schools, Pierce, was continuing in-service focused on thinking sponsored.

Several principals in the low schools believed that the most important way their school could improve the teaching of thinking was through changes in the teachers themselves. But we found little evidence that they either wanted to or knew how to influence teachers in significant ways. In general, we found principals at the representative schools inactive in initiating programs to help teachers improve in the teaching of thinking.

Summary

The three top schools, then, exhibited on-going curriculum revision and improvement driven by an explicit focus on thinking. Curriculum work was done in peer or team planning with the department heads involved in guiding and reviewing the process. Principals at two of these schools also provided support for the departments' attention to thinking. The four representative schools, on the other hand, exhibited few attempts by department chairs or principals to encourage better attention to thinking through curriculum development. Without a shared goal of fostering students' thinking within the department, curriculum revision alone failed to generate higher levels of classroom thoughtfulness.

The efforts of staff at the select departments in the area of curriculum seem to confront two of the major barriers to classroom thoughtfulness identified by Onosko (1990), knowledge dissemination and the coverage epidemic. The instructional model of thinking adopted by each department highlighted central problems (Carlsberg), metaphors (Arnold), or skills (Grandville) rather than the dissemination of knowledge to students. As each social studies staffs implemented their model of thinking, the model also brought some continuity within courses and between courses in the department.[4] Curriculum work stressed not content to be covered but key themes or problems, helping to move these departments away from the pressure to cover large amounts of content with which many social studies teachers continue to struggle.

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[4] Some of the unique organizational features in three of the restructured schools attempted to break down the strict boundaries between different subject areas. Although the benefits of subject matter integration may be debatable, these changes were intended to counter the curriculum fragmentation between departments that is common in traditionally structured schools. It should be pointed out that the leadership efforts focused on the department in the top three schools may reinforce these subject boundaries which might mitigate against even higher levels of classroom thoughtfulness.

Pedagogy

Leadership that attended to actual teaching strategies and approaches to instruction also contributed to the higher levels of classroom thoughtfulness in the three top schools. These efforts went beyond simply monitoring and reviewing curriculum, course planning, or individual lesson plans of a teacher or a group of teachers. The purpose here was the careful analysis and examination of pedagogy.

The bottom schools

Typically, principals or department chairs observed and supervised teachers a few times throughout the school year in all seven schools considered here. But there is a considerable contrast regarding the exercise and influence of this role between the top three select schools and the bottom four representative schools. Principals in the representative schools generally maintained that formal teacher supervision or evaluation is not an effective means for the improvement of their staff. They cited the limited opportunities to observe and comment on teachers' lessons and pedagogy and suggested that the established hierarchy between administrators and teachers made it difficult to develop constructive relationships.

The limited potential of using the supervisory process as a means to communicate expectations to staff was also suggested by comments from some department heads that colleagues in the department would feel uncomfortable if they were to observe and evaluate their classes. Thus, at one of the schools, Downing, the department head made only one observation of social studies teachers each semester, with a pre- and post-conference. The discussion following each observation was not focused on higher order thinking, according to the chair. In his view, these evaluations and other formal procedures for staff improvement were not only unnecessary, they tended to undermine his working relationship with teachers.

The social studies department chair at Erskine High School stated that she attempted to use her supervisory role as a means to influence teachers to focus more on students' thinking. Teachers here, however, received a contradictory message from the department head when she observed their classes. They reported feeling considerable pressure from her to follow the established curriculum in the specified time frames; this did not allow the time for reflection and in-depth study that thoughtful instruction requires. Nor did the teachers have significant opportunities to work on the connection between curriculum content and the kind of classroom discourse that might promote higher order thinking.

At Pierce, the department chair did use classroom observation and follow-up conferences with teachers successfully. She focused, in part, on thinking by analyzing the difficulty level of the teacher's questions during instruction. During these encounters, she attempted to get teachers beyond factual, informative questions to comparison, analysis, and critical questions and the application of ideas to other situations. The three social studies teachers we interviewed at this school indicated that their department chair provided significant help to them in their attempts to promote thinking both through the formal supervisory process and her efforts in organizing the workshops on thinking with the college. If these efforts were connected more closely with department curriculum work, the staff at Pierce might begin to attain more success in exhibiting higher levels of classroom thoughtfulness.

For the most part, however, department chairs at the low scoring schools preferred and relied largely upon informal means to convey expectations to staff. They tried to encourage change through informal conversation, setting an example in their own teaching, good will, and gentle persuasion. One department head, for example, indicated that formal supervision of teachers, following the criteria established by the district, was one of the major responsibilities of his position. But he also stated that he conveyed 90% of his expectations informally, such as during "coffee bull sessions" when

a teacher may want to discuss an issue. Other department chairs might work closely with one or two social studies teachers each year when the teachers themselves take the initiative. In an important sense, though, relying on informal means of improving instruction translated into passive leadership and little sense of direction or purpose. In these departments, it did not seem to contribute to a better emphasis on classroom thoughtfulness.

The top schools

In contrast, department chairs and principals at the three top schools seemed to be more effective in encouraging a focus on pedagogy to promote thinking. At Grandville, the supervisory role was assumed primarily by the department chair although he was not part of the official teacher evaluation process. Taking an active and aggressive role, the chair wrote lengthy summaries of class observations in which he made specific suggestions on how a teacher might better implement the department's focus on thinking skills (e.g., emphasizing the need for reflective time for students: "Critical thinking takes time"). Teachers were receptive and responsive to his feedback. Part of this may be attributable to the fact that the chair also taught demonstration lessons to the social studies staff, providing opportunity for their feedback and criticism. This process seemed to serve both as a model for teaching thinking and as a vehicle to further collaborative work and open discussion around issues of improving students' thinking.

The principal at Grandville made few observations, allocating that task to the department heads. He did, however, make a serious effort to promote a program of peer observation and a positive sense of collegiality and community among staff. During prep periods or over lunch, a group of teachers, usually those teaching the same course, would meet. During this time, one of them presented a lesson followed by discussion with their colleagues. According to the social studies department chair here, the peer observations were central to improvement in teaching thinking.

At Carlsberg, both the social studies department chair and the principal were involved in the observation and supervision of department staff. The department chair here exhibited a systematic approach to supervision, which he did daily. He observed teachers at least twice per year, many more if the teacher was experiencing difficulty or was new to the school. He gave explicit suggestions, praise, and encouragement after the lesson and followed this up with a written summary for his files which was also given to the teacher. Through this process, the department chair communicated his expectation, which was accepted as a departmental "rule," that the instructional format should be predominantly whole-group, teacher-directed discussion. That is, he expected the social studies teachers to be **interacting** with students the entire class period. This emphasis on discussion had a positive effect of promoting classroom thoughtfulness. Teachers in the department respected his coherent and purposeful leadership.

The principal at Carlsberg also placed significant emphasis on supervision of staff. He led workshops with department chairs "to help improve and refine methods of observation and assessment." He made over 100 observations per year in all departments, including written summaries and criticisms, more than any other principal in the select school sample. As with his analysis of teachers' exams, he stressed "power" questions in his assessment scheme. In addition, he read and commented on the observation summaries of department chairs. A former social studies department head himself, he worked closely with the current chair to reinforce the department's goal of promoting students' thinking.

Both the department chair and principal at Carlsberg, along with other teachers, taught demonstration lessons to classes, with colleagues observing. Afterward, the staff discussed and critiqued the lesson. In previous years, the department head had also used department meetings for peer observation. A video-tape of an individual teacher's lesson would be shown and discussed critically by the group. At other times, the chair devoted meeting time to the details of instruction

by giving teachers a lesson objective and having them develop an engaging introduction to the lesson and four thought-provoking questions. Through various means, then, the principal and social studies department chair at Carlsberg fostered an atmosphere of attention to and open discussion around issues of pedagogy related to thinking.

Of the three top select schools, Arnold's department chair gave the least direct attention to instructional issues and pedagogy. As mentioned previously, the he had the same teaching responsibilities as other staff members. Consequently, in contrast to the other 2 top schools, he was not involved in class observation or supervision, peer observations, or demonstration lessons. Planning teams did, however, stress instructional issues, such as how to utilize a student notebook format that would encourage students to think about and explore ideas and take a position on an issue. The principal here did take an active role in the supervision of teachers and used this opportunity to focus on the promotion of thinking. He also encouraged collaboration between the social studies and English departments. This was facilitated through Arnold's writing project, led by one of the mentor teachers, which was viewed by teachers as a critical vehicle for developing students' thinking.

Summary

In sum, significant efforts at the top three schools addressed the specific issue of pedagogy for the promotion of higher order thinking. These efforts included the supervision of instruction by the social studies department chair and/or principal, and at two schools, peer observations and the teaching of demonstration lessons to staff. Thus, the common departmental vision was focused on thinking, emphasized in curriculum development projects, and further reinforced through deliberation on pedagogy. These efforts appear to have contributed to a culture of professional collegiality that helped to overcome, as one department head put it, the "lone ranger" syndrome in which teachers are viewed as independent, autonomous professionals, with few

attempts to bring teachers together to struggle collectively over the aims of education or critically examine their practice in the classroom.[5]

The attention given to instructional approaches and pedagogy addresses important barriers to classroom thoughtfulness (Onosko, 1990). First, pedagogy is rarely the focus of reflective examination in schools. In the top three departments, however, this attention made problematic the traditional forms of pedagogy in secondary social studies, that is, didactic instruction for the purpose of disseminating information. Secondly, the collaborative ethos that was focused on both curriculum and pedagogy in these top schools helped to overcome the isolation of individual teachers that often leads to attitudes of competitiveness and defensiveness. Finally, critical examination of pedagogy for thinking might encourage teachers to emphasize higher order thinking with all students, regardless of perceived ability. That is, this focus may alter teachers' low expectations of some students that often restrict classroom thoughtfulness.

Conclusions

A distinct pattern emerges from the comparison of the top three schools with the bottom four schools. Leadership in the top schools was directed at systematic program development for the promotion of higher order thinking within the social studies department. The programs at these schools, while exhibiting differences in their conceptions of thinking and in models for instruction, did share important features: members of the department shared a common conception and vision of higher order thinking; curriculum development and lesson design activities done in teams encouraged the staff to relate the conception of thinking to what was actually taught; and continuous

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[5] One of the representative schools, Vander Meer, achieved a higher level of classroom thoughtfulness than other representative schools, even with a departmental culture that lacked collegial spirit. Teachers tended to work alone and rarely had the opportunity to discuss important professional issues. It is, however, risky to assume that this kind of culture will contribute to the promotion of thinking; in fact, the significant lesson from the top select schools is that leadership that fosters a collaborative collegial culture can result in higher levels of classroom thoughtfulness.

discussion among the department staff focused on how well they were progressing toward their vision. The four representative schools that scored at the bottom of our sample, although pursuing some activities similar to those of the three select schools, exhibited no systematic effort at the department level to further the promotion of higher order thinking.[6]

Having described differences between departments scoring the highest and lowest in classroom thoughtfulness, we next examine the extent to which our findings tend to support or refute a number of propositions about effective instructional leadership.

1. A principal's leadership is essential to initiate and sustain school improvement efforts; principals must take on an active interventionist role (see Angus, 1989). Our findings support only part of this conclusion that has been asserted in previous research reports. Rather than initiating program development on higher order thinking, principals in the top three schools played an active role in **supporting** the efforts of the department chair. Activities to implement a focus on thinking originated from social studies department chairs and department staff.

2. Instructional leadership must be shared among principals, assistant principals, department chairs, and teachers (Peterson, 1989). This is confirmed by our study. The top schools distinguished themselves from the bottom schools in part through strong departmental leadership. That leadership worked deliberately on a systematic, department-based program focused on thinking. Authority and program direction were not simply equated with the formal roles of principal and department chair; teachers were actively and continuously involved in the conceptualization and implementation of the programmatic model.

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[6] Interestingly, principals in both the top select schools and the bottom representative schools accepted the conventional features of school organization, such as class size, scheduling, and the division of subject disciplines into distinct departments. None of them pressed for organizational innovation as a strategy for better promoting higher order thinking.

3. Effective instructional leaders attend to both the instructional process and the cultural side of the school, the tacit understandings of staff members that shape their views and behaviors about educational issues (Peterson, 1989). Our findings support this proposition as well. In the two schools that scored at the top on our measure of classroom thoughtfulness, Grandville and Carlsberg, efforts were focused on pedagogy and instructional approaches, primarily through peer observation and demonstration lessons. Their efforts in this area may account for the difference between their mean scores (4.05 and 4.04 respectively) and Arnold's mean score (3.85), a difference equivalent to approximately .50 of the standard deviation for all schools. Although department chairs and principals did not specifically consider the cultural side of the school as distinct from their focus on thinking, leadership in the three top schools seems to have contributed to norms of collegiality and collaboration and to a common vision and clarity of purpose within the department.

4. Effective instructional leadership is educative, stimulating dialogue about teaching and learning, and encouraging reflectivity and critique (Smyth, 1989). This is also confirmed by our findings. In the most successful departments, department chair leadership facilitated consistent discussion of curriculum and professional issues within the department, and, at two of the schools, observation and feedback on actual teaching. The discussions in these schools continually reinforced the emphasis on thinking. If leadership is primarily informal, providing only moral support and approval, that is, without a focus on substantive issues of curriculum and pedagogy, it fails to contribute to a focus on thinking or classroom thoughtfulness.

Collaborative work among teachers and department heads must be approached with some caution, however. As Hargreaves and Dawe (1989) argued, collaborative professional development can have contradictory tendencies. On the one hand, it can be a mechanism for "teacher empowerment and professional enhancement, bringing colleagues together to generate critical yet also practically-grounded reflection on what they do as a basis for wiser, more skilled action." On the

other hand, it can also break down teacher isolation "to facilitate the smooth and uncritical adoption of preferred forms of action (new teaching styles) introduced and imposed by experts from elsewhere, in which teachers become technicians rather than professionals exercising discretionary judgment" (p. 7). In short, leadership in this area can promote either "critical and collaborative teacher cultures or contrived collegiality" (p. 7). The high scoring schools demonstrated the former outcome -- teachers were involved with each other and with department chairs in continuous interaction and dialogue to develop and implement their model of thinking.

One central question of the research project was: Why have some social studies departments made successful movement toward the goal of promoting higher order thinking while others have not? As shown here, leadership within the department appears to be a significant part of the answer. Efforts by department chairs and principals addressed several important barriers to classroom thoughtfulness in curriculum, teacher thought, and school culture (see Onosko, 1990). Active instructional leadership at the department level that generates a common vision around a shared conceptualization of thinking, combined with curriculum development within a culture of collegiality and attention to teaching and pedagogic strategies, seemed to facilitate improved levels of classroom thoughtfulness in high school social studies classes.

Appendix
Minimal Criteria for Classroom Thoughtfulness
(5 point scales)

1. *There was sustained examination of a few topics rather than superficial coverage of many.*

Mastery of higher order challenges requires in-depth study and sustained concentration on a limited number of topics or questions. Lessons that cover a large number of topics give students only a vague familiarity or awareness and, thereby, reduce the possibilities for building the complex knowledge skills and dispositions required to understand a topic.

2. *The lesson displayed substantive coherence and continuity.*

Intelligent progress on higher order challenges demands systematic inquiry that builds on relevant and accurate substantive knowledge in the field and that works toward the logical development and integration of ideas. In contrast, lessons that teach material as unrelated fragments of knowledge, without pulling them together, undermine such inquiry.

3. *Students were given an appropriate amount of time to think, that is, to prepare responses to questions.*

Thinking takes time, but often recitation, discussion, and written assignments pressure students to make responses before they have had enough time to reflect. Promoting thoughtfulness, therefore, requires periods of silence where students can ponder the validity of alternative responses, develop more elaborate reasoning, and experience patient reflection.

4. *The teacher asked challenging questions and/or structured challenging tasks (given the ability level and preparation of the students).*

By our definition higher order thinking occurs only when students are faced with questions or tasks that demand analysis, interpretation, or manipulation of information; that is, non-routine mental work. In short, students must be faced with the challenge of how to use prior knowledge to gain new knowledge, rather than the task of merely retrieving prior knowledge.

5. *The teacher was a model of thoughtfulness.*

To help students succeed with higher order challenges, teachers themselves must model thoughtfulness as they teach. Of course, a thoughtful teacher would demonstrate many of the behaviors described above, but this scale is intended to capture a cluster of additional characteristics likely to be found in any thoughtful person. Key indicators include showing interest in students' ideas and in alternative approaches to problems; showing how he/she thought through a problem (rather than only the final answer); and acknowledging the difficulty of gaining a definitive understanding of problematic topics.

6. *Students offered explanations and reasons for their conclusions.*

The answers or solutions to higher order challenges are rarely self-evident. Their validity often rests on the quality of explanation or reasons given to support them. Therefore, beyond offering answers, students must also be able to produce explanations and reasons to support their conclusions.

Table I

Departmental Mean HOTAV Scores and Standard Deviations According to Sample Set

	Mean	SD
Select Departments (N=90 lessons):		
Grandville	4.05	(.57)
Carlsberg	4.04	(.47)
Arnold	3.85	(.65)
Bradley	3.48	(.75)
Scarborough	3.22	(.56)
All Select Departments	3.73	(.33)
Representative Departments (N=125 lessons):		
Vander Meer	3.63	(.84)
Newcombe	3.35	(.84)
Mathewson	3.13	(.96)
Pierce	2.94	(.83)
Wadsworth	2.93	(.98)
Downing	2.92	(.41)
Erskine	2.88	(.88)
All Representative Departments	3.11	(.26)
Restructured Departments (N=72 lessons):		
Williams	3.72	(.68)
Carter	3.56	(.51)
Nelson	3.36	(.90)
Shaw	3.35	(.78)
All Restructured Departments	3.50	(.15)
All Departments	3.40	(.38)

Table II

Leadership Efforts --- Higher Order Thinking

Top Schools: G = Grandville; C = Carlsberg; A = Arnold.

Bottom Schools: E = Erskine; W = Wadsworth; D = Downing; P = Pierce.

Focus	Schools
Goals	
1. a. Shared goals, common vision	G,C,A / W
b. Common conception of HOT[a]	G,C,A
2. Visits to other programs, participation in workshops with emphasis on HOT	G, A / E, P
3. Technical assistance, consultants or staff developers	G
Curriculum	
1. Curriculum development, on-going revision	All / All
2. a. DH involved in curriculum planning	G,C,A / P
b. with focus on HOT	G,C,A
3. Prin involved in curriculum planning, with HOT focus	C,A
4. a. Peer or Team planning	G,C,A / D
b. with focus on HOT	G,C,A
Pedagogy	
1. a. DH observes/supervises	G,C / All
b. with focus on HOT	G,C / P
2. a. Prin observes/supervises	C,A
b. with focus on HOT	C,A
3. Peer observations	G,C
4. Demonstration Lessons	G,C

[a] HOT = Higher Order Thinking; DH = Social Studies Department Head.

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